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- (b) prior to the completion of said programming operation, receiving a suspend signal;
- (c) determining whether or not to suspend said programming operation;
- (d) if said programming operation is suspended, updating, if necessary, a status register to indicate said programming operation is suspended; and
- (e) providing an output signal to indicate said suspend status of programming operation.

21. (Amended) The method of claim 20, wherein [step (e)] providing the output signal comprises [the steps of]:

- (1) receiving a read status register/signal, and
- (2) providing said output signal in response to said read status register signal.

22. (Amended) The method of claim 20, wherein [step (e)] providing the output signal comprises [the step of] providing [said] the output signal at a dedicated status output.

23. (Amended) The method of claim 20, further comprising [the steps of]:

- (f) performing a second data modification operation to a second memory location;
- (g) after the completion of said second data modification, updating, if necessary, said status register to indicate said write operation is not suspended; and
- (h) resuming said first data modification operation.

25. (Amended) The method of claim 20, further comprising, prior to performing a programming operation [step (a)][, the step of]: